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NIC 14317

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Meeting Announcement to Discuss a Network Mail System

Purpose 1

The purpose of this RFC is to announce a meeting at SRI-ARC on the Network Mail problem discussed at the January 1973 Principal Investigators' Meeting in San Diego. 1a

We have set the meeting for Thursday, February 22, 1973, at 8:30 AM in the SRI-ARC conference room. If a second day is needed, Friday would be used. 1b

The agenda will include a discussion of the problem, and a discussion of alternate solutions. 1c

The goal of the meeting is to produce a clear definition of what the solution ought to be, what steps have to be taken, and who should do what. 1d

The results of the meeting will be published as an RFC for further dialogue, as is done with other suggested protocols. 1e

Aspects of the Problem 2

There are already several subsystems existing on the Network whose function is to send and receive mail. 2a

The principal problem is to coordinate and extend these subsystems so that 2b

a) uniform user and site identifications are used, 2b1

b) the File Transfer Protocol is utilized to allow mail to be originated and distributed anywhere on the Network without having to go through a central system, 2b2

c) there is an option for the sender to record the dialogue and have it catalogued for others to read and reference, and 2b3

d) there is a way to handle mail for TIP users. 2b4

A sugrestion made in the past to have a typewriter type terminal permanently attached to TIP's to record all hardcopy messages directed to that TIP should be reviewed. 2b4a

We (SRI-ARC) have been looking into the problem of using the File Transfer Protocol to allow NIC Journal mail to be sent and delivered over the Network, without the user having to

know and use NLS. We intend to integrate this function with the Tenex SNDMSG capabilities. For some preliminary internal ARC discussion on this subject, you may be interested in reading two Journal items, one by Charles Irby (IJOURNAL,14308,1:w) and the other by Jim White (IJOURNAL,14312,1:w). 2c

We realize that there are many benefits to this approach, but would like to have such a scheme fit into an agreed upon Network wide message and document sending protocol. 2c1

Especially important to us is that questions concerning user and site identifications, recorded and unrecorded dialogue, and coordination among other mail subsystems on the Network, be fully understood and mutually resolved at the design level before implementation work proceeds. 2c2

We therefore want to discuss these issues at the Network Mail meeting February 22. 2c3

Role of The NIC 3

In conjunction with the above discussion, we will consider offering the services of the Network Information Center in three related areas: 3a

to implement and maintain identification files for all network users and sites; 3a1

(These files could be made available in sequential form through a standard socket so that Network sites could either query them or periodically obtain updated copy.) 3a1a

to record in the NIC Journal that mail which the sender wishes to have recorded, and to catalogue those items for later reference; 3a2

to distribute Journal or message mail through the Network via File Transfer Protocols if requested; 3a3

to provide and use NIC dialogue group identifications, in order to make it simpler to send items to several persons who had a common interest. 3a4

Network Mail Meeting Logistics 4

If you or anyone at your site would like to attend the meeting, please notify Mil Jernigan (MEJ) at SRI-ARC: 4a